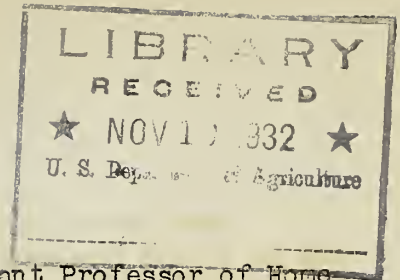


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CLOTHING FOR THE SMALL CHILD:

A radio talk prepared by Miss Edith Rhyme, Assistant Professor of Home Economics, Montana State College of Agriculture, and delivered by Miss Jean Stewart in the Agricultural Extension Service period of the Western Farm and Home Hour Wednesday, October 12, 1932, through Station KGO and nine other stations associated with the NBC-KGO network, Pacific Division, National Broadcasting Company.

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I don't suppose many of us have thought much about the general principles of selecting and making clothing for children -- especially we haven't thought about whether we can apply the principles of selecting and making adult clothing to selecting and making children's clothing. Most of us have taken it for granted that the same general principles apply to both jobs; that the only difference is in the size of the garments.

But recently the clothing specialists, the child psychologists, and the physiologists and various otherists have been doing their best to convince us that the general principles of planning and choosing and making children's clothing are a whole lot different from the general principles that apply to adults' clothing. As we have gained better understanding of childhood, we have come to realize that the first principle of designing children's clothing is to plan garments that permit all parts of the child's body to move freely. Children's clothes should have as few construction lines as will give good fit, as they are not only the most comfortable, but also easy to make and easy to keep clean.

Now you know that I am going to talk about rompers and sunsuits. Of course, rompers are a necessity when the child begins to investigate the world for himself. My sympathy goes out to the poor child who isn't given rompers, and who gets tangled up in a dress and petticoat every time he starts to creep. The youngster who has to fight against that handicap will have a poor opportunity of developing a good body and a grand opportunity of developing a bad disposition.

So, as I said, rompers are most necessary garments in children's wardrobes. A lot of home economists have experimented with different types of rompers. And so have millions of mothers. The consensus of opinion from all of this experience on the principles of choosing and making rompers is about as follows:

Select roomy garments with no tight bands. Be sure that the garment is loose at the neckline, armholes, through the body, and around the legs. You see, the doctors tell us that tight bands reduce surface circulation of the blood and thus may cause the child that has to wear clothing with tight bands to have cold feet or be irritable. From the experience of mothers and the experiments of home economists, has come a general agreement that raglan sleeves allow the most freedom. A few gathers or pleats across the front and back are also advisable to allow fullness. Provide long enough rompers so that when the child bends his clothes do not bind.

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The other principles of choosing and making rompers generally agreed upon are to choose the type of romper suitable to the age of the child, to choose rompers with front openings so that the creeping baby can be dressed easily and so that the older child can be trained early to dress and undress himself. The early training of a child in dressing and undressing himself is valuable to him, because it develops skill in his fingers, a feeling of self reliance, and pride of accomplishment. As to avoiding novelties: Mothers and home economists certainly agree on the fact that odd closing, bows, ruffles and collars do not belong on rompers. If the design is simple and the color pleasing, few if any decorative features are needed. Of course, cotton materials are the most appropriate for rompers. The child under two should wear soft, smooth materials such as lawn, gingham, and fine broadcloth. The older child can wear these and some sturdier fabrics such as galatea, suiting, or poplin. At all times fabrics which are too stiff and heavy should not be chosen as they are irritating, uncomfortable and do not permit enough ventilation.

But whatever the fabric remember to have pockets in the garment.

That goes for sunsuits as well as for rompers. Now the general principles of choosing and making sunsuits are about as follows: One of the most desirable sunsuits is made much like a sleeveless romper, but with a transparent waist of strong marquisette, or any similar fabric. Not many of the ultra violet rays of the sun pass through textile fabrics. But, of course, they will pass through between the yarn of a loosely woven material.

If a hat is needed to complete a sunsuit ensemble choose a loose fitting and broad-brimmed one that shades the eyes and protects the back of the neck. A most attractive sun hat for the small girl can be made with a cretonne brim and a removable circle of net for the crown.

Finally, I think all of us agree that the modern child should not know the oppressiveness of clothes. There should be no difference in line and hardly any difference in ornamentation between everyday and dress-up clothes. Of course, the dress-up clothes may be of daintier materials and colors with a bit of simple hand work, but aside from that they are just like play frocks.

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